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ATTORNEY AND ADVOCACY GROUP TO SHARE $500K GRUBER FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE PRIZE ON 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF PRIZE PROGRAM

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Each Has Set in Motion Dramatic Changes to Help
Victims of Discrimination Gain Access to Equal Justice

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June 10, 2009, New York, NY – The Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation today announced that, on the tenth anniversary of the Gruber Prize Program (see below), it will award its 2009 Justice Prize to an individual and an organization for their tireless advocacy of human rights for individuals belonging to oppressed groups that historically have not had an effective voice in, or access to, the justice system:

Bryan Stevenson

Bryan Stevenson – executive director of Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), which represents indigent defendants, death row inmates, and juveniles who have been denied fair and just treatment in the legal system. With his staff, Stevenson has largely been responsible for reversals and reduced sentences in more than 75 death penalty cases. He has provided an effective training and consulting resource for counsel representing death row inmates and is spearheading litigation in 19 states to get a fair review of sentencing and parole-eligible re-sentencing. Stevenson has been consistently recognized by the National Law Journal as one of the 100 most influential lawyers in America.

European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC)

European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) – an international public interest law organization that combats anti-Romani racism and human rights abuse of Roma in Europe. ERRC has set in motion more than 500 court cases in 15 countries to bring to justice state and non-state actors who have discriminated against Romani individuals in education, housing, employment, healthcare and other areas, or have committed violence against them. It has secured over 2 million euro in compensation for Romani individuals for the abuse they suffered and the subsequent failure of their respective governments to ensure justice.

The Justice Prize will be awarded in a ceremony this fall celebrating the achievements of the recipients, who will share the $500,000 prize.

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"The work of Bryan Stevenson and that of the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) demonstrate what can be accomplished against tremendous odds when highly principled, knowledgeable, and committed people appeal for justice," said Judge Bernice Donald, U.S. District Court, Western District of Tennessee. "In securing access to justice for those most in need of protection from discrimination – including, at times, discrimination within the legal system itself – Bryan Stevenson and ERRC assist oppressed minorities in developing the voice and arguments they need to demand equal justice under law. Their work is a model for human rights advocacy and presents a compelling case for the necessity of focusing on and developing public interest law in legal education and practice."

A graduate of Harvard Law School and the Kennedy School of Government, **Bryan Stevenson** is the founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), a private, nonprofit organization that provides legal representation to indigent defendants and prisoners who have been denied fair and just treatment in the legal system. Based in Montgomery, Alabama, EJI litigates on behalf of juvenile offenders, poor people denied effective representation, minority defendants whose trials are marked by racial bias or prosecutorial misconduct, and others against whom the justice system may be stacked. As a staff attorney for the Southern Center for Human Rights in Atlanta (1985) and as executive director of the Alabama Capital Representation Resource Center (1989-95), Stevenson represented capital defendants. His representation of condemned prisoners has won him numerous awards, including a MacArthur Fellowship Award, the Reebok Human Rights Award, the ACLU National Medal of Liberty, and the American Bar Association Wisdom Award. In 1996 he was named Public Interest Lawyer of the Year by the National Association of Public Interest Lawyers. Stevenson and EJI have successfully demonstrated how racial minorities are routinely excluded from jury service and have worked to develop guidelines for monitoring jury selection for use by community workers, lawyers and advocacy groups. Stevenson also addressed Russian lawmakers and was part of the effort that succeeded in getting 800 death sentences commuted in Russia during the Yeltsin era, and has worked with advocacy groups in Eastern Europe on litigation strategies to protect oppressed groups and with lawyers in the Caribbean to reduce executions.

He is dedicated to achieving a national consensus in this country for abolishing life sentences without parole for 13- and 14-year-olds. In 1998, Stevenson joined the clinical faculty at NYU Law School and is currently a professor of law there. He has also been visiting lecturer of law at Harvard, Yale, and University of Michigan Law Schools.
(A complete biography is available at http://www.gruberprizes.org.)

Through strategic litigation, national and international advocacy, research and policy development, and training of Romani activists, the **European Roma Rights Centre** has battled anti-Romani racism and human rights abuse of Roma in more than 27 countries for the past 13 years. Of the approximately 300 cases that have been completed since its founding in 1996 by the Hungarian human rights activist and dissident Ferenc Koszeg, more than 255 have been won or settled positively, resulting in over 2 million euro paid in compensation to Romani victims of human rights abuse and the subsequent failure of government to remedy it. ERRC has won more than 22 cases in international jurisdictions, including more than 15 cases before the European Court of Human Rights. ERRC efforts have resulted in groundbreaking European precedents and heightened awareness in the areas of school segregation (Czech Republic), the state's obligation to investigate racial motivation in crimes committed by

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non-state actors (Croatia, Bulgaria), police brutality (Bulgaria, Macedonia), housing rights and forced eviction issues (Montenegro, Slovakia, Greece, Italy, Bulgaria), compensation to victimized communities and implementation of anti-racism and non-discrimination programs (Romania), and coerced sterilization of Romani women (Hungary). ERRC has also become the world's largest information source on Roma rights, producing and contributing to more than 580 publications in the last 13 years. The organization has developed and lobbied for key pieces of legislation, including anti-discrimination law, in Albania, Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Macedonia, Ukraine, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Poland, and Latvia. ERRC has organized national and international symposia to debate key issues and has provided national and regional training of judges, prosecutors, lawyers, and other legal professionals in the implementation of anti-discrimination and human rights law. Its complex research models for documenting systemic human rights abuses and discriminatory practices have been used systematically to fight segregation and secure equal access to quality education, employment, housing, access to social services and healthcare, and child protection for Roma, as well as to document violence against Roma communities. More than 200 Roma interns have been trained by ERRC and have contributed to its work. Some of them are now working in influential positions in government agencies, international NGOs, and national equality bodies, as well as in national Romani NGOs in their home countries – enhancing and sustaining the results of the ERRC.
(A complete biography is available at http://www.gruberprizes.org.)

The Gruber Foundation Justice Prize is presented to individuals or organizations for contributions that have advanced the cause of justice as delivered through the legal system. The award is intended to acknowledge individual efforts, as well as to encourage further advancements in the field and progress toward bringing about a fundamentally just world.

Additional Information

In addition to the cash award, recipients receive a medal of honor and a citation, which reads:

The 2009 Justice Prize of the Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation is proudly presented to Bryan Stevenson and the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) for advancing human rights and the cause of justice.

Bryan Stevenson's commitment to skillfully defending the marginalized and youth facing capital charges, and to recruiting and training others to do so, is an emphatic rejection and response to policies in Alabama and elsewhere, of prosecuting such defendants without providing them with effective representation. It demonstrates a passionate commitment to justice for all, and has resulted in more than 75 death sentences being overturned.

The ERRC has been an indefatigable advocate of human rights for Romani victims of discrimination of all forms, persecution, and violence in Europe. Through precedential litigation before national and regional courts and innovative policy proposals, the ERRC has ensured substantial justice in the face of often indifferent and complicit governments and public opinion in the 13 years since its formation.

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Members of the committee that selected the 2009 Justice Prize recipients:

- **Carmen Maria Argibay,** Supreme Court of Justice of Argentina
- **Giuseppe Bisconti,** Studio Legale Bisconti
- **Arthur Chaskalson,** Constitutional Court of South Africa (Ret.)
- **Param Cumaraswamy,** Barrister-at-law at Inner Temple, London; Advocate and Solicitor in Kuala Lumpur
- **Bernice Donald,** U.S. District Court, Western District of Tennessee
- **Martin Lee,** Office of Mr. Martin C.M. Lee, QC., SC

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Laureates of the Gruber Foundation Justice Prize:

• **2008: Judge Thomas Buergenthal and Mr. Jerome J. Shestack.** Judge Buergenthal served as judge and president of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and helped end the practice of disappearances in Honduras; Shestack is a former president of the American Bar Association who successfully defended dissidents and helped lead the struggle against race and gender discrimination.

• **2007: Judge Carmen Argibay** of Argentina, **Judge Carlos Cerda** of Chile, and **Ms. Mónica Feria** of Peru. Judge Argibay has been a pioneering women's advocate, corruption foe, and participant at the Tokyo Tribunal; Judge Cerda is an independent and courageous member of the Chilean judiciary who pursued Pinochet abuse while the dictator was in power; and Feria is an international lawyer, defender of children's rights and tireless champion of victims of the Fujimori prison massacre of 1992.

• **2006: The Honorable Aharon Barak**, retired President of the Supreme Court of Israel, renowned for championing an activist judiciary and the rule of law and democracy.

• **2005:** Malaysian attorney **Dató Param Cumaraswamy** who, at considerable risk to himself, stood up for the independence of the judiciary.

• **2004: Chief Justice Arthur Chaskalson,** the first president of South Africa's Constitutional Court, and **Deputy Chief Justice Pius Langa**, an advocate and judge who helped establish South Africa's Constitution as a model for modern democratic societies.

• **2003: Madame Justice Rosalie Silberman Abella** and **Madame Justice Bertha Wilson** for their contributions to jurisprudence in Canada and beyond. Abella, who served on the Ontario Court of Appeal for 20 years before her appointment to the Supreme Court, is one of Canada's leading advocate for women's and human rights; Wilson, the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada, has forged a reputation as a champion of the underdog and a dedicated proponent of fair play.

• **2002: Fali Sam Nariman**, Member of the Parliament of India, Senior Advocate in the Supreme Court of India and President of the Bar Association of India, has played an important role in both establishing and enforcing the rule of law in India and in establishing universal principles of human rights as a standard for India and other emerging democracies.

• **2001: The Honorable Justice Anthony Roy Gubbay**, former Chief Justice of Zimbabwe, and the **Law Society of Zimbabwe** were the joint recipients of the inaugural Justice Prize, honored for upholding the independence of the judiciary and protecting the rights of the people of Zimbabwe.

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The Gruber International Prize Program honors contemporary individuals in the fields of Cosmology, Genetics, Neuroscience, Justice and Women's Rights, whose groundbreaking work provides new models that inspire and enable fundamental shifts in knowledge and culture. The Selection Advisory Boards choose individuals whose contributions in their respective fields advance our knowledge, potentially have a profound impact on our lives, and, in the case of the Justice and Women's Rights Prizes, demonstrate courage and commitment in the face of significant obstacles.

The tenth anniversary of the Prize Program will be celebrated on July 1, 2009, in an event at Rockefeller University in New York City. The event will include a symposium entitled "DNA, the Brain, and Society," featuring distinguished scientists David Botstein, Linda Buck, Fred Gage, and Solomon Snyder. To attend the event or to obtain additional information,
visit http://www.gruberprizes.org/GruberPrizes/TenthAnniversary.php.

The Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation honors and encourages educational excellence, social justice and scientific achievements that better the human condition. For more information about Foundation guidelines and priorities, please go to: www.gruberprizes.org.

For more information on the Gruber Prizes email media@gruberprizes.org or contact of The Gruber Foundation at 340-775-8035 or by mail 140 W 57th St Suite 10C New York, NY 10019.
Media materials and additional background information on the Gruber Prizes can be found at **our online newsroom: http://www.gruberprizes.org/Press.php**

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